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The emergence of Africa as a front on the Global War on Terror has elevated the importance of Phase Zero and shaping operations in this region. It is argued the current Unified Command Plan is ill designed to address the complexities of the continent of Africa and that a proposed United States Africa Command would be better positioned to leverage the advantages of a robust, cohesive Theater Security Cooperation Plan. This new division of Areas of Responsibilities can be analyzed in terms of operational art and the principle of warfare and finally concludes that it is time for the United States to focus a renewed attention on African issues and that the designation of a new Combatant Commander would be a demonstrable statement of our concern.

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U.S. AFRICAN COMMAND: SHAPING AFRICA FOR THE FUTURE

by

Hans Sholley

LCDR, U.S. Navy

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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23 October 2006

Abstract

The emergence of Africa as a front on the Global War on Terror has elevated the importance of Phase Zero and shaping operations in this region. It is argued the current Unified Command Plan is ill designed to address the complexities of the continent of Africa and that a proposed United States Africa Command would be better positioned to leverage the advantages of a robust, cohesive Theater Security Cooperation Plan. This new division of Areas of Responsibilities can be analyzed in terms of operational art and the principle of warfare and finally concludes that it is time for the United States to focus a renewed attention on African issues and that the designation of a new Combatant Commander would be a demonstrable statement of our concern.

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INTRODUCTION

> "We seek to shape the world, not merely be shaped by it;
> to influence events for the better instead of being at
> their mercy."[1]
>
>   - President George W. Bush

The continent of Africa has recently emerged as the quiet
front on the Global War on Terror. It has not been a campaign
of kinetic engagements such as the continuing conflicts of
Operations *Iraqi* and *Enduring Freedom*, but instead this front
has materialized into an increasingly important effort to
shape the future of a continent and a potential operational
environment. The shaping of a theater of operation is a
deliberate strategy of cooperation referred to as Phase Zero,
which is aimed at building partner nation capacity, gaining
access to the operating environment and fostering
relationships with cooperative nations.

One of the Unified Combatant Commander's principle tools
for implementing Phase Zero is the Theater Security
Cooperation Plan (TSCP)[2]. TSCP is a fundamental tool actively
utilized by both primary Combatant Commanders that serve the
areas of responsibility within the African continent. United
States European Command (USEUCOM) and United States Central

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[1] President George W. Bush, *Letter introducing The National Security Strategy March 16, 2006,* Washington D.C.: The Whitehouse, 2006.
[2] Wald, Charles, General, "The Phase Zero Campaign," *JFQ* 4th Quarter, no. 43 (2006): 72-75.

Command (USCENTCOM) share the responsibility of monitoring the 53 nations of Africa, and in their mission to promote regional security both have employed robust security cooperation plans.[3] The focus of USEUCOM has been northern, Saharan Africa, while USCENTCOM has developed a theater cooperation program aimed at the Horn of Africa.

Despite these regional advances, the competing commitment of resources, the vast scope of responsibilities and the seams created by the intersection of Combatant Commander's Areas of Responsibility (AOR) have created a need for a more focused unity of effort. It is proposed that a renewed division of the Unified Command Plan (UCP) include a United States African Command that is solely tasked with the deliberate shaping and stability of this crucial region.

AFRICA: A CONTINENT IN CRISIS

"Millions of lives are at risk in forgotten or neglected crises in Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. These are the silent tsunamis of our time."[4]

Africa is a study of extremes. The second most populous continent in the world, Africa boasts a population of almost

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[3] "United States Central Command Homepage" http://www.centcom.mil/sites/uscentcom1/default.aspx (accessed September 16, 2006)

[4] Egeland, Jan, United Nation Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, "UN OCHA Homepage: Forgotten and Neglected Emergencies" http://ochaonline.un.org/ (accessed October 15, 2006).

890 million; unfortunately it is also the poorest with seventeen of the twenty most deprived nations in the world residing on the continent.[5] Africa's incredibly diverse ethnic, cultural and religious background has long caused friction within its peoples and nations. Unfortunately these fractures have only been magnified by the paternal influences of one hundred and fifty years of colonial interest. The rise of independent Africa that began in the post World War II era and continued until 1977 with the independence of Djibouti, further exposed the continent to the perils of post-colonialism: political instability, international debt, rampant poverty, ethnic rivalry and long standing territorial disputes.[6]

These overwhelming issues have challenged nascent governments, whether burgeoning democracies or totalitarian dictatorships. Struggling to meet the challenges inherited from the post colonial and Cold War eras, Africa also must confront current crises such as the HIV pandemic, devastating famine and natural disasters. This has left many nations failing or extremely fragile and in jeopardy of joining the failed nation ranks.

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[5] "CIA Fact Book Rank Order – GDP – Per Capita"
https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html (accessed October 14, 2006).
[6] Henze, Paul B., The Horn of Africa: From War to Peace. (St. Martin's Press, 1991), 55.

Many struggling nations have been unable to meet the challenges of governance; six of the top ten nations on the Foreign Policy and Fund for Peace Failed States Index 2006 are from the African community.[7] Sudan, Cote D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Zimbabwe and Chad, all fail the expectation of governance as defined by the Failed State Index.[8]

Sudan has been wracked by two decades of civil war and genocide, leading to the deaths of over three million citizens and the exodus of two million more. The current expansion of this civil strife in the Darfur region has added another estimated 300,000 casualties and more refugees, thousands of which have fled into neighboring Chad further destabilizing the region.[9] Cote d'Ivoire is still embroiled in a civil war following a 1999 junta and subsequent illegitimate election, its instability has required the continuing intervention of international peacekeepers. Likewise Sierra Leone struggles to emerge from a decade of civil war that has killed or displaced a third of its population. Finally, Somalia has devolved as fifteen years of clan rivalry has taken its bitter toll since the fall of its socialist regime in 1991. These failed

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[7] "The Failed States Ranking Index" *Fund for Peace* (2006), http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/fsi/fsindex2006.php. (accessed October 15, 2006).
[8] "The Failed States Ranking Index" *Fund for Peace* (2006), http://www.fundforpeace.org/programs/fsi/fsindex2006.php. (accessed October 15, 2006).
[9] "CIA Fact Book Sudan" https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/sudan.html (accessed October 14, 2006)

governments and those that teeter on the brink, lack the
infrastructure to cope with the growing humanitarian crises
within the region.

These destabilizing emergencies further weaken
governments, eroding legitimacy and increasing lawlessness.
The vacuum created by the failure of governance, transparency
of national borders, and a growing population of citizens
disenfranchised by the government's inability to provide the
most basic necessities are the ingredients necessary to
catapult these regional crises into international spotlight.

WHY AFRICA IS IMPORTANT TO THE UNITED STATES

One might ask why the internal issues of a fragile
African continent are a concern to the national security of
the United States, but the answer is simple: failing states.
As stated by President Bush in the 2002 National Security
Strategy:

> "America is now threatened less by conquering states than
> we are by failing ones. We are menaced less by fleets
> and armies than by catastrophic technologies in the hands
> of the embittered few." [10]

The conditions that lead states to failure are the
breeding grounds for internal dissention and the evolution of

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[10] President George W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington D.C.:
The White House, 2002.

transnational threats. Nations unable to maintain the rule of law, demonstrate an inability to enforce national borders, and fail to address grievous, social conditions, have become havens or at least temporary sanctuaries for international terrorist organizations.

This was the case in 1991, when Osama bin Laden resided in Sudan, before moving to Afghanistan in 1996.[11]   With a growing population of disaffected youth and limited economic opportunity, a vast pool of possible recruits exists within these nations and in the case of the Saharan and Horn of Africa nations, the proximity to Europe and the Middle East has only magnified this as an international problem.

As a world leader, the United States is compelled to lead and support international efforts to stabilize a region in peril. Not only is it in our national security interest, but it our responsibility to preserve the world community. This is an undertaking of incredible magnitude and can only be achieved through the application of the entire spectrum of national power: Diplomatic, Information, Military and Economic. While the interagency application of diplomatic, informational, and economic power is an ongoing effort to aid Africa, the partnership of military cooperation is at the

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[11] Garamone, Jim. "Backgrounder: Bin Laden and his Al Qaeda Network." http://www.defendamerica.mil/articles/a100501a.html (accessed 21 October, 2006).

operational frontline. United States military forces on the

ground in Africa, are conducting theater shaping activities

vital to national interests while coincidently fortifying

African governments through military to military engagement

and humanitarian assistance.

WHAT IS PHASE ZERO?

The practice of operational phasing presents a commander

the opportunity to analyze options and mitigate risks

associated with each escalation of an operation or campaign.[12]

Joint Operational Planning (JP 5-0) defines Phase Zero and

shaping as:

> "Joint and multinational operations and interagency
> coordination inclusive of normal and routine military
> activities performed to dissuade or deter potential
> adversaries and to assure or solidify relationships with
> friends and allies. They are executed continuously with
> the intent to enhance international legitimacy and gain
> multinational cooperation in support of defined military
> and national strategic objectives."[13]

The ultimate goal of Phase Zero is to build lasting

international partnerships and relations through the exchange

of ideas and training while improving partner nation

capabilities and interoperability. This symbiotic cooperation

not only benefits the United States' national interests by

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[12] Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP-5-0: Joint Operational Planning (Draft)*. Washington D.C.: The Pentagon, 2006.

[13] Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP-5-0: Joint Operational Planning (Draft)*. Washington D.C.: The Pentagon, 2006.

reinforcing regional stability, but it also strengthens the partner nation's military and in many cases civilian infrastructure. General Charles Wald, USA, Deputy Commander of United States Europe Command said:

> "The preventative focus of Phase Zero is less costly both in blood and treasure than the reactive approach to crisis. At the very least Phase Zero helps set the conditions for an easier transition to a more comprehensive U.S. intervention in a crisis."[14]

At its best, Phase Zero is a long term investment in military resources (time, effort, money and manpower) to cultivate favorable conditions for regional security, with the hope that stability precludes any need for more intrusive and costly military operations. At its worst, Phase Zero is the ultimate in regressive planning. Its actions sculpt a future operational environment providing tactical insight into potential difficulties and advantages that may be encountered if the United States must expand its range of military operations. One of the most effective tools in the implementation of Phase Zero is the Theater Security Cooperation Plan.

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[14]Wald, Charles, General, "The Phase Zero Campaign," *JFQ* 4th Quarter, no. 43 (2006): 72-75.

CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THEATER SECURITY COOPERATION

The Security Cooperation Plan is the operational employment of Phase Zero, which is further refined to include categories of activities that reinforce the program's objectives of developing partner capacity, building military relationships and maintaining American access. Both USEUCOM and USCENTCOM have developed effective yet different models of implementation.

USEUCOM maintains an aggressive African security cooperation plan aimed at members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through the implementation of two initiatives: Operation *Enduring Freedom* – Trans Sahara (OEF-TS) and the National Guard State Partnership Program.[15]

OEF-TS is a series of TSC programs tied to Operation *Enduring Freedom* and the United States Government's Trans Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI). This large scale TSC incorporates the seven West African nations of Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Algeria, Chad, Senegal and Mauritania.[16] USEUCOM's focus is developing the regional government's ability to supervise the vast Saharan desert and prevent terrorists from using the remote region as a sanctuary to train and garrison. This has been coupled with efforts to

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[15] "EUCOM Operations and Initiatives" http://www.eucom.mil/english/Operations/main.asp (accessed October 6, 2006).

[16] Wald, Charles, General, "The Phase Zero Campaign," *JFQ* 4th Quarter, no. 43 (2006): 72-75.

bolster medical and civil conditions in the region to reinforce national legitimacy and infrastructure. OEF-TS has met with success and has become USEUCOM's model for theater-wide TSC.

Another application of USEUCOM's security cooperation has been the State Partnership Program, although only utilized in four African nations it is a template for potential TSC growth. Sponsor National Guard units partner with host nation armed forces to conduct unit level training and civil-military projects, currently Wyoming-Tunisia, North Dakota-Ghana, New York-South Africa and Utah-Morocco are partnered.[17]

At USCENTCOM, the Combatant Commander has chosen to administer security cooperation in a more direct manner. In 2002 the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) was established to conduct counter terrorism operations in the seven nations that encompass USCENTCOM's responsibilities in Africa. This standing force of roughly 1,500 inter-service, coalition personnel is headquartered at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti, where the mission has transformed from direct action to a primarily Phase Zero, shaping campaign. Like USEUCOM, CJTF-HOA is confronted with vast territory and various degrees of governance. Their military to military partnership is

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[17] "National Guard Bureau Office of International Affairs" http://www.ngb.army.mil/ia/Tab3.aspx (accessed October 6, 2006).

aimed at training host nations in border protection, small

unit counter terrorist and coastal patrol operations.[18] Shared

with this operational focus has been a concerted humanitarian

effort as well. Numerous schools, hospitals, and medical

clinics have been built and renovated in order to foster good

will and bolster the legitimacy of the host nation and its

ties with the United States. General Abizaid, USA, Commander,

U.S. Central Command stated:

> "Dollar for dollar, person for person, our return on our
> investment out here (CJTF-HOA) is better than it is
> anywhere in the CENTCOM area of responsibility."[19]

USEUCOM and USCENTCOM have created equally robust

security cooperation programs within Africa. The benefits

have far exceeded the investment both towards American

national interests and regional assistance, yet separately

these plans lack cohesive structure other than the broad

strategic objectives that govern them. It is opined that the

current alignment of the Unified Command Plan does not

concentrate enough effort, infrastructure or resources towards

solving the regional and global threat caused by Africa's

instability.

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[18] Hasenauer, Heike. "Mission: Horn of Africa" *Soldier* 60, no. (August 2005).
[19] Dofner, Cindy, Tech SGT, "Gen. Abizaid: Military Work in Horn of Africa 'Blueprint' for Future." US Fed News Service, May11, 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

A reorganization of the current UCP to distinguish a unique United States African Command will demonstrate the United States commitment to assist the African continent and address its strategic importance. This independent command will reflect the Commander in Chief's concern on addressing fragile states.[20] In doing so an Africa Command can display a unity of effort not previously applied to Africa, and set the course for the continent-wide Theater Security Plan.

The advantages of a single combatant commander assigned to guide the United States policy towards the entire African continent can be analyzed with the application of five of the seven principles of war, more specifically: Objective, Economy of Force, Unity of Command, Simplicity, and Mass.[21]

If the UCP consolidated the AOR's into an Africa Command it would more clearly define the Combatant Commander's objective: The enduring stability of the nations of Africa in order to preserve the U.S. national interest of security. Subordinate to this principle would fall each nation's ability to maintain its national boundaries and police it own territory. This clearly defined objective would refocus the commander's efforts on the 53 African nations, rather than

[20] President George W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America.* Washington D.C.: The White House, 2002.

[21] Joint Chiefs of Staff. *JP 3-0 Joint Operations (Draft).* Washington D.C.: The Pentagon, 2006.

sharing a commander's concerns with the other 43 countries of USEUCOM or the 18 remaining nations of USCENTCOM.

Next an analysis of economy of force is simply a comparison of two Combatant Commanders' competition for limited resources. Currently USCENTCOM is a supported command that has limited forces permanently apportioned to its operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. While USEUCOM does have standing forces, it has found itself cast in the supporting role as USCENTCOM wages the War on Terror. An African Command would likely find itself in a similar posture as USCENTCOM, any operation or theater-wide security cooperation initiative would require forces from supporting component commanders. In the model of CJTF-HOA, a small, permanently garrisoned U.S. force working in concert with African Union forces stands as a ready reaction force and also as the oversight to standing security cooperation operations. This standing force would form the nucleus of the TSC program and lead other multinational forces that temporarily augment shaping operations.

A single Combatant Commander would also provide a unity of command to efforts in Africa, erasing the seams created by the previously divided UCP. The commander could build on current security cooperation initiatives and incorporate the best practices of USEUCOM and USCENTCOM on a continental

scale. This integrated planning within boundaries of the continent would be done by the same staffs with a common objective creating a synergistic unity of effort. A single unified commander would also be the primary integration point for regional organizations i.e. ECOWAS and the African Union, U.S. Ambassadors and international organizations. A Combatant Commander and staff would be much more adept at solely Africans affairs and would develop, over time, a regional expertise that is crucial as globalization interconnects the entire world.

Simplicity is the preparation of precise, uncomplicated orders to achieve the objective and minimize confusion. In the challenging multi-cultural continent of Africa, a concise, direct plan is imperative for implementation on a continental scale. Working with dozens of partner nations, it must be clear that the United States is not stabilizing Africa but instead helping Africans stabilize their homeland. If a theater-wide Security Cooperation Plan is to be effective, potential partner nations must understand that our efforts are not completely altruistic and that their nation bears the responsibility to maintain national boundaries, prevent terrorism and contribute to the overall stability of Africa.

Finally the principle of mass; a Combatant Commander who is focused on Africa will best be able to concentrate all

elements of national power at the most strategic point to

achieve the results that are in the United States national

interests. A dedicated Combatant Commander will not have to

share his attentions on the continuing operations in the

Middle East and Southwest Asia, or the daily concerns of

Europe and NATO, he can focus on a region that has long been

neglected and must be stabilized in order to stem the

international crises that threaten to destabilize the entire

world.

CONCLUSION

Although creating a new unified commander is a drastic

change to the Unified Command Plan, it would greatly enhance

our nation's ability to shape the continent of Africa. A

Combatant Commander would provide a conduit for the

implementation of the entire spectrum of national power.

However his direct molding of the military's ability to assist

partner nations would dramatically improve regional security

and could prevent Africa from being the "next hot spot" in the

War on Terror. The National Security Strategy states:

> "The United States recognizes that our security depends
> upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and
> failing states and bringing ungoverned areas under the
> control of effective democracies."[22]

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[22] President George W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*. Washington D.C.:
The White House, 2002.

It is imperative that we utilize the best tool to accomplish this objective, and it is my opinion that a robust Security Cooperation Plan implemented by a United States African Command is the means to achieve this lofty goal. Africa has been neglected long enough, and as the world gets smaller it is impossible to say it is not strategically in our best interest to act. The time has come and the United States must become involved in the future of Africa.

The following mission statement is proposed:

United States African Command is a unified combatant command whose mission is to conduct the full range of military operations unilaterally or in concert with the coalition partners; to enhance regional stability and advance U.S. interests in Africa through partnership with African nations and organizations.

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